

27 New Broad St,
London. E.C. 30th April 1868.

My Dear Mr Garrison.

You will probably be surprised at not having received up to this time a Report of the Paris Conference: I hope, however, ere many days to send you a few copies. The delay has arisen from the extreme difficulty of getting together into anything like compact form, the various papers which were presented to that meeting, written as they are in different languages and having to be translated. Then, there has been the after work, consisting of Addresses to the Queen of Spain; to the King of Portugal; the Emperor of Brazil; the Pope; the Sultan; the Vice-roy of Egypt; the President of the Transvaal Republic, South Africa; the Sultan of Zanzibar, and Lord Stanley. The getting up of these, and the obtaining of the requisite signatures to them, have involved many journeys to Paris, and in so far as the Report is concerned, an unavoidable loss of time. When issued, however, it will be of value as an historical

document, and will, I doubt not, be read with interest.

I saw a kind of report of the proceedings in a letter which was copied from the New York Tribune into the National Anti-Slavery Standard. The writer, whoever he was, penned it in a spirit which was neither kind nor candid, and he was evidently ignorant of the obstacles we had to surmount, before we could obtain even the permission to hold the Conference, of the conflict of political elements we had to guard against, and especially of the danger of an open discussion, which - in the absence of the right absolute to speak freely - we were bound to restrain within certain prescribed limits. Hence the stiffness and formality, which I admit pervaded the proceedings, but which were unavoidable under the circumstances. I cannot help thinking, that had the correspondent I refer to, been better informed, he would, if he could not have expressed entire satisfaction with the tone and character of the Meeting, at least have abstained from

carping at what was done.

I met recently in Paris, a Brazilian abolitionist, who is also a Senator, but cannot find that up to the present time much has been done of a practical character towards solving the great question of emancipation. The projected measure seems to me to be far more tender of the slave-holder than of the slave. It is proposed, first: to prohibit the introduction of slavery into those Provinces where it does not at present exist. Second: In those in which very few slaves are to be found, immediate emancipation with compensation to the masters is suggested, and the extension to these Provinces of the aforesaid prohibition. Third: All children born of slaves, after the promulgation of the Decree, to be declared free, but to remain for twenty-one years as apprentices under the tutelage of their late masters. Fourth: In the event of the latter renouncing the right of tutelage, compensation to be awarded to the owner, based upon a calculation of what the slave would have earned, less an allowance for maintenance and wages during

the period mentioned. Fifth: At the end of thirty-three years, absolute freedom to all slaves not within the aforementioned categories.

You will see that this scheme is unmitigatedly bad. In its main features it resembles the one originally proposed by the Dutch Government in 1854 ignominiously defeated in the Chambers. It is consolatory to be assured, as I am, that it is so regarded by Brazilian abolitionists, and should it emerge from the Council of Ministers and find its way into the Brazilian Parliament, it will be certainly rejected. A power of initiation appears to be wanting. There is a weakness in the Government, of whatever party composed, which indicates a want of conviction, and therefore an absence of will to do. Nevertheless, the presentation of even a bad plan of emancipation, shews that public opinion is leavening the lump, and we may therefore hope some good may yet arise out of the present evil.

Our poor friend Vizcarrondo, the

Secretary of the Madrid Society, has been at the very point of death. I am glad to say, that the latest news represent him as out of danger, though unable to leave his room. His illness has been a serious drawback to our cause in Spain, for, although he has many active co-adjutors, the whole are not equal to himself. We are informed that the Government has been pressing forward the registration of the Slaves in Cuba, and the production of the returns of Estates under mortgage. When these are published, it will doubtless be found that very few of the Estates are unencumbered. We also learn that the Clerical party in Spain has come over to our side, at least in part, and this is very important. Hitherto it has - like the Clerical party in every country - steadfastly opposed not only emancipation, but every work of progress. The light, therefore, which has come out of this darkness is the more welcome and fruitful.

In Lord Stanley's reply to the Address sent to him on behalf of the Conference, is the following paragraph, after an assurance that the objects of the Conference have his entire sympathy.

"Being deeply interested in the furtherance of these objects, Lord Stanley gladly avails himself of this opportunity for pointing out to the International Committee, that one of the most effectual modes by which they may do good service to the cause which they have in hand, will be bringing public opinion to bear upon the question of Slavery in those countries in which the institution still exists."

Such encouragement coming from so authoritative a source, seems to shew that ~~the~~ universal public opinion is indeed a mighty lever ~~to~~ which may be worked now with good effect, to uproot Slavery. I wish to enlist you and the friends of freedom in the United States, in favour of a movement to extirpate the evil from Brazil, and the Portuguese and Spanish possessions. For the present we think all effort should be directed to Spain, the Government of which country, we know to be in arrear of the people. I wish to suggest that you should hold counsel with your friends, with a view to

get up an address to the Queen of Spain, to be signed by as many American women, as may feel disposed to write in a request for the abolition of Slavery from Cuba and Porto Rico. I should like it to be on a scale similar to that, which some years ago was sent out from the "Women of England to the Women of America". Another from male American abolitionists would also be desirable. I suggest this to you in the hope that you will take the matter in hand, and carry it through; also, because I consider that you are better situated than any one to bring the subject before those who are likely to co-operate for this end.

We are watching with much interest the progress of the trial of the President. We hope, nay, we doubt not, it will terminate in favour of right. It is really a glorious spectacle, to see a nation vindicating its right of self-government, and asserting the law with such calm majesty. Such an act of self-assertion, is calculated to extort the respect even of an enemy to Republican institutions.

We are, however, noting with ever greater interest, the development of the position of the freedmen. Conflicting accounts relating to them reach us, and we sometimes fear there may be little or no exaggeration in the picture we get, of the disorganisation of labour. The most experienced of us believe, the fault lies more with the late owners than with the late slaves. Much is it to be regretted, that the Times and cheap papers of large circulation, such as the Telegraph and Standard, diff. false information, purposely, as I believe, to mislead; and really when I see how wrong gains the ear of the multitude and of the powerful, I find myself wavering in the faith I nevertheless hold to, that in the end right must prevail.

With very kindest regards, and hoping that your dear wife is enjoying good health considering her position,

I am,

My dear Mr Garrison,
Yours very sincerely,
L. A. Chamberzow

W. L. Garrison Esq.